

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 SOFIA 01415 150717Z  
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11  
ACDA-12 EB-08 /086 W  
-----038860 160425Z /15

R 141412Z JUL 78  
FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4922  
AMCONSUL MUNICH  
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

CONFIDENTIAL SOFIA 1415

E.O. 11562: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, BU  
SUBJECT: EMBASSY DISCOUNT ALLEGED COUP ATTEMPT

REF: MUNICH 3307

1. INTRODUCTION & SUMMARY: EMBASSY DOES NOT HAVE INFORMATION CONFIRMING ALLEGED ABORTIVE COUP IN BULGARIA. REFTEL PROVIDES FIRST REPORT WE HAVE HEARD OF POSSIBLE COUP ATTEMPT. WE DO HAVE SECOND-HAND REPORTS OF RECENT DIFFICULTIES IN PLEVEN, AS INDICATED BELOW. THESE REPORTS ALSO ARE UNCONFIRMED. ON BALANCE, WE DOUBT REPORTS OF AN ATTEMPTED COUP, ALTHOUGH THERE MAY HAVE BEEN SOME DEVELOPMENT REFLECTED IN THE RUMORS OF HIGHLY UNUSUAL DIVERGENCE BETWEEN PLEVEN AND HIGHER FOFIA AUTHORITIES. TO DATE, THERE HAVE BEEN NO ANNOUNCED CHANGES OF OFFICIALS IN PLEVEN. END SUMMARY.

2. EMBASSY HAS HEARD UNCONFIRMED RUMOR THAT SOME WORKERS IN PLEVEN, WITH SYMPATHIZERS AMONG SOME OFFICIALS AND RESERVE OFFICERS THERE, HAD OBJECTED TO SPECIAL MEDICAL AND OTHER PRIVILEGES OF THE SENIOR LEADERSHIP IN BULGARIA. REPORTEDLY, UNIDENTIFIED SENIOR PLEVEN OFFICIALS BROUGHT

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THIS DISCONTENT TO ATTENTION OF ZHIVKOV, AND SUGGESTED CUT-BACK IN SUCH SPECIAL PRIVILEGES OF THE LEADERSHIP. ZHIVKOV REPLY WAS SAID TO BE THAT SUCH MATTERS WERE NOT DECIDED IN PLEVEN. REPORTS TO THIS EFFECT (COMING FROM TWO WESTERN EMBASSIES, BUT POSSIBLY THE SAME BULGARIAN SOURCE) DO NOT INDICATE EITHER ATTEMPTED COUP OR PURGE.

3. OUR SECOND-HAND SOURCES DID NOT INDICATE THAT QUESTIONS OF BULGARIA'S AGRICULTURAL STRUCTURE WERE INVOLVED, ALTHOUGH CURRENT WIDE-SPREAD AGRICULTURAL DIFFICULTIES (SEE SOFIA 1387, NOTAL--BEING REPEATED TO ADDRESSEES) HAVE REPORTEDLY RESULTED IN SOME LOCAL SHORTAGES, IN PARTICULAR OF MEAT. SIMILARLY, WE HAVE NO INDICATION THAT QUESTION OF BULGARIAN TIES TO THE USSR HAVE BEEN RAISED.

4. WE SUSPECT THAT THERE IS PROBABLY SOMETHING BEHIND RUMORS WE HAVE HEARD AND THOSE RECEIVED BY RFE. AT PRESENT, HOWEVER, THERE IS NO CLEAR INDICATION OF WHAT MAY ACTUALLY HAVE OCCURRED, AND LEAST OF ALL SUPPORT FOR CONCLUSION THAT THERE WAS ANY ATTEMPT OR CONSPIRACY AIMED AT A COUP. EMBASSY STRONGLY AGREES THAT RFE MANAGEMENT NOT DO ANYTHING WITH THIS UNCONFIRMED AND CONTRADICTORY INFORMATION. WE WILL REPORT ANY FURTHER INFORMATION OR REPORTS BEARING ON THIS SUBJECT, AND WOULD OF COURSE APPRECIATE ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION RECEIVED BY DEPT OR OTHER ADDRESSEES.

GARTHOFF

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Subject:** EMBASSY DISCOUNT ALLEGED COUP ATTEMPT  
**TAGS:** PINT, BU  
**To:** STATE MUNICH  
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**Review Markings:**  
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